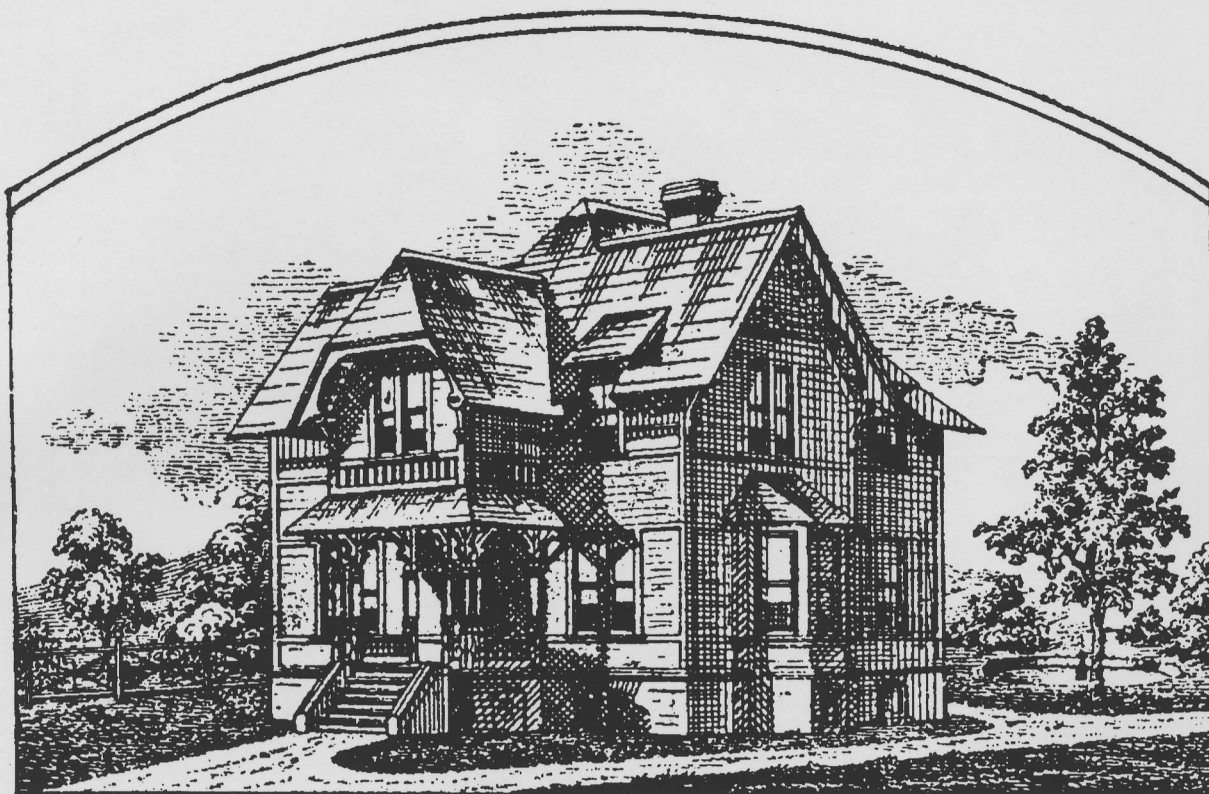


LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT



Palliser's Cottage Home

DESIGN 35

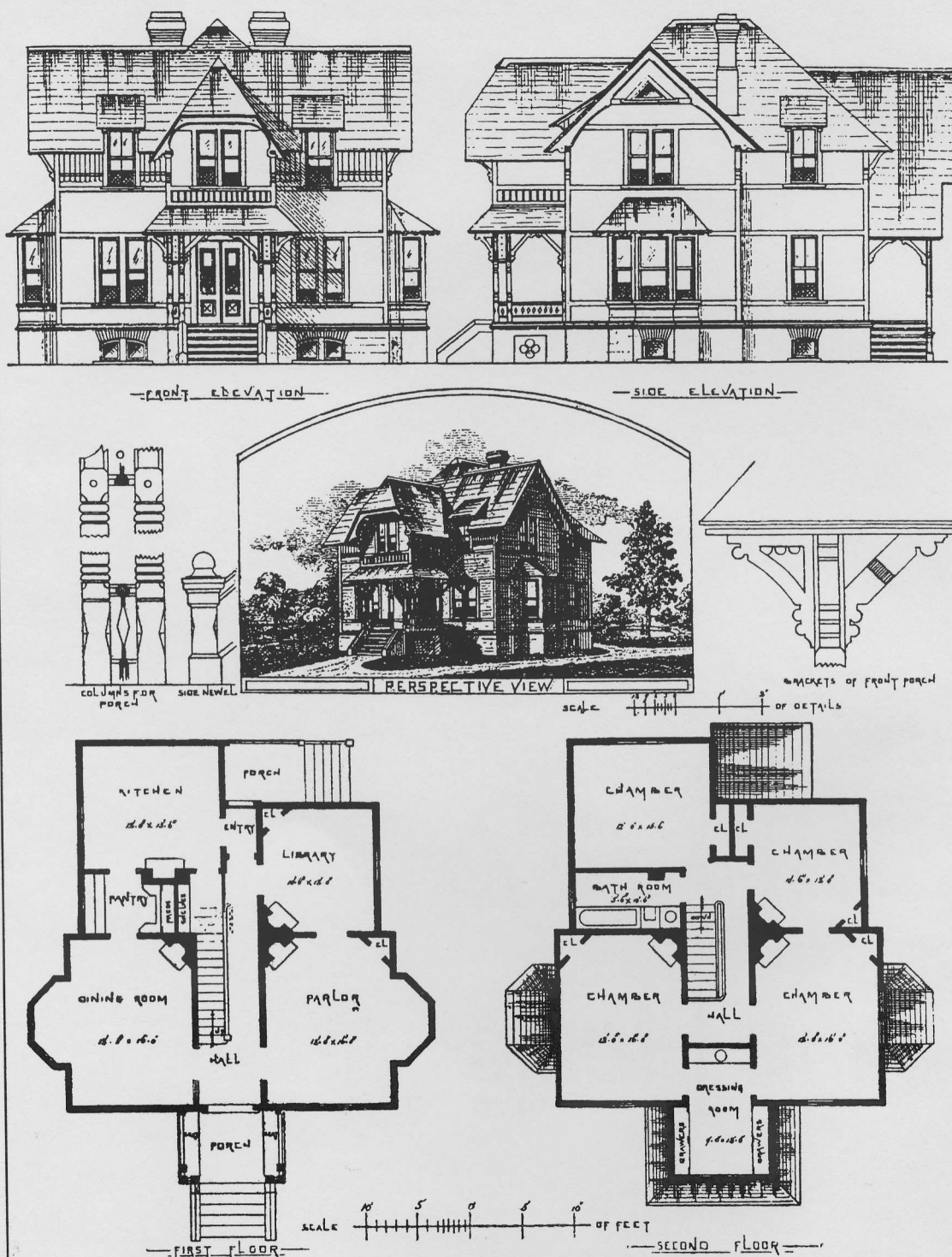
2314 W. 111th Place

Submitted to the Commission on Chicago Landmarks on October 8, 1999



CITY OF CHICAGO
Richard M. Daley, Mayor

Department of Planning and Development
Christopher R. Hill, Commissioner



A rendering of "Design 35" (see cover) was included in a page of plans, details, and elevations (above) published in 1878 in *Palliser's American Cottage Homes*, a popular mail-order catalog of house plans. The typeface used on the cover is taken from an 1887 Palliser's catalog.

Palliser's Cottage Home No. 35

(also known as the Edgren House)

2314 W. 111th Place

Built: 1882

Architect: Palliser, Palliser & Co.

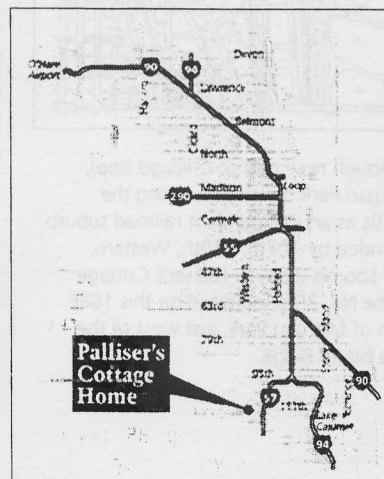
When Rev. Johan Edgren, a theology professor, was faced with having to very quickly build a fashionable new house in the outlying suburb of Morgan Park in 1882, he decided not to hire an architect. Instead, he chose the house design from a book called *Palliser's American Cottage Homes*. Within five months, the house was built and occupied.

Today, nearly 120 years later, that building—virtually unaltered—survives as one of the best pure examples of “pattern book” architecture in the Midwest. It is also the only documented design in Chicago by Palliser, Palliser & Co., which were widely considered to be the nation's most influential pattern book architects of the late-19th century.

The house is an excellent and, for Chicago, rare example of the Stick Style of architecture, a type of design that featured wood framing laid atop the building's exterior cladding. The intent of this design—to “reveal” the building's underlying structure—was considered to be a startling modern approach to architecture because of its departure from the more decorative historical revival styles of the period.



This recent photograph of Palliser's Cottage Home No. 35 shows how its appearance is virtually unchanged from the original house plans (facing page). The location is indicated below on a map of Chicago.



Finally, this house ranks as one of the most intact structures dating to the period when Morgan Park became an independent "railroad suburb," a community linked to Chicago by the Rock Island commuter rail line. It is one of the earliest surviving houses of architectural distinction in the Morgan Park community.

A Railroad Suburb

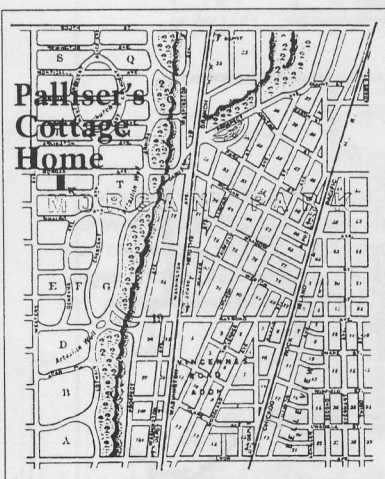
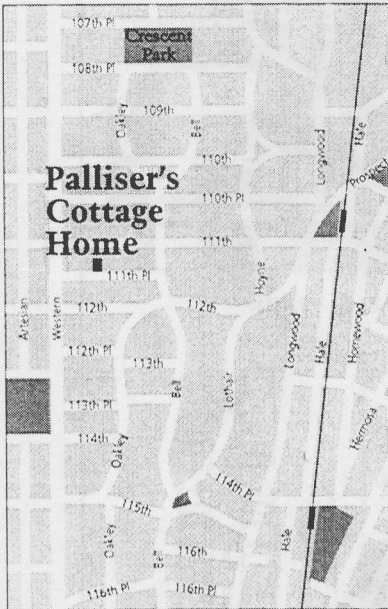
Morgan Park is a classic example of the type of community that developed and prospered during the late-19th century based on access to railroad lines. During the last four decades of the 19th century, rail service had a strong influence on the patterns of urban settlement, as real estate speculators began to plan outlying communities around commuter railroads. Developers sold large lots for the construction of single-family houses, and often sold land at discounts to civic and religious institutions that would build in the area and help attract middle-class families to these new "railroad suburbs."

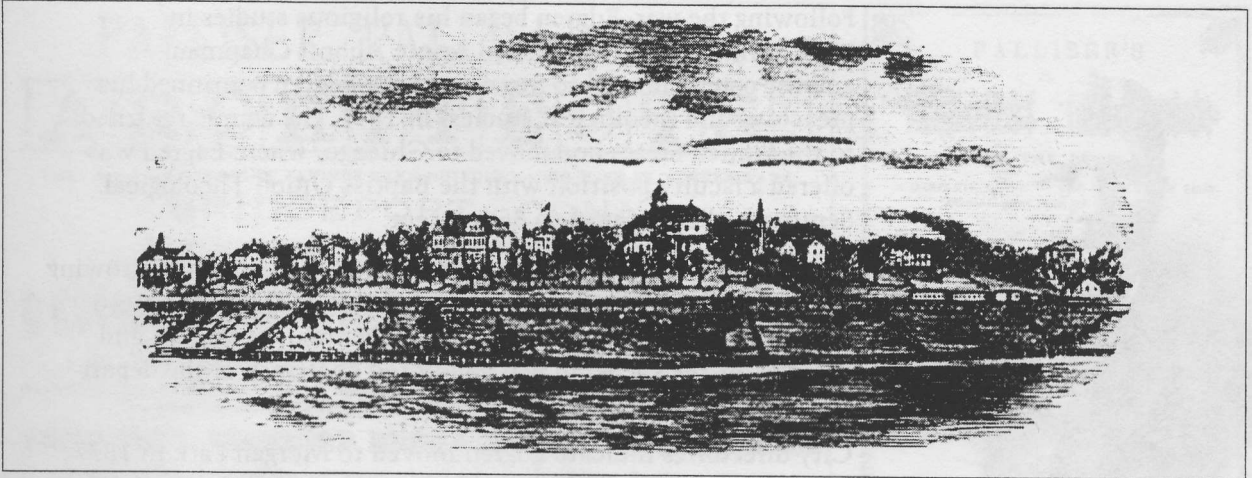
Morgan Park takes its name from Thomas Morgan, who in 1844 bought 3,200 acres bounded by present-day 91st and 115th streets, and Ashland and Western avenues. The principal feature of this tract was, and still is, the fifty- to eighty-foot tall "Blue Island Ridge," (the remains of a prehistoric glacial ridge) which runs in a north-south direction just east of Western Avenue. In 1852, the Chicago & Rock Island Railroad Co. constructed a railroad line through the eastern part of Morgan's property along present-day Vincennes Avenue, but it was used primarily for freight.

In 1869, George Walker and several partners bought Morgan's property. Inspired by the area's major topographical feature, the partners named their company the Blue Island Land and Building Co. The area north of 107th Street was called "Washington Heights," while the section between 107th and 119th streets was named "Morgan Park." The company clearly intended residential development, as it laid out winding tree-lined streets and small parks.

Most importantly for property sales, however, the company persuaded the Rock Island railroad to build a spur branch from its main line to provide service near the ridge. This "dummy line" branched off from the main route at 97th Street, ran west along 99th Street to the base of the ridge, and then south to 129th Street in the Village of Blue Island, where it rejoined the main line.

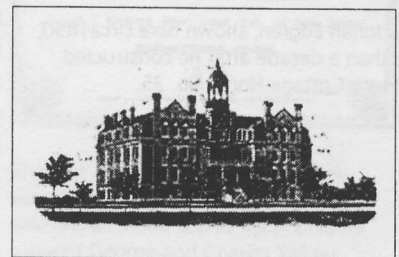
Walker and his colleagues were successful during the 1870s, selling property at carnival-like auctions that, according to 19th-century historian A.T. Andreas, "would make one suppose that [circus impresario] P.T. Barnum had spread his canvas on the prairie." The company provided free transportation and organized festivities to help buyers see the advantages of suburban life.





The Blue Island Land and Building Co. also wanted to make Morgan Park into an educational center, and therefore subsidized the construction of four new institutions:

- Morgan Park Military Academy (the present-day Morgan Park Academy) in 1873
- Chicago Female College (1875)
- Baptist Union Theological Seminary (1877)
- American Society of Hebrew (1880)



A late-19th century view (top) of some of the large institutions and residences that were built in Morgan Park. One of those buildings was the Baptist Union Theological Seminary (above), where the owner of Palliser's Cottage Home No. 35, Rev. Johan Edgren, taught.

The largest of these institutions was the Baptist Union Theological Seminary. It had begun instruction in 1867 in the original University of Chicago building at 35th Street and Cottage Grove Avenue (demolished). The seminary soon constructed its own building adjacent to the university, but the construction debt eventually made it impossible for the seminary to meet its operating expenses. Consequently, the school quickly accepted an offer by the Blue Island Land and Building Co. of land and a new school building in Morgan Park.

Rev. Johan Edgren

The seminary prospered and played a crucial role in attracting families to the area. One of these new residents was faculty member Rev. Johan Alexis Edgren.

By the time Edgren (1839-1908) joined the seminary's faculty in 1871, he had led a colorful life. Born in Sweden, he left school when he was 13 to go to sea. A voyage to New York brought him in contact with seamen's missionaries, and his survival of a terrible storm on a subsequent trip made Edgren resolve to become a missionary himself.

His ministerial calling, however, was delayed. In 1861, Edgren reportedly was a witness to the outbreak of the Civil War when, on a ship off Charleston, South Carolina, he saw the first shots fired on Fort Sumter. Soon after, Edgren joined the United States Navy and participated in a number of military blockades.



Rev. Johan Edgren, shown here circa 1890, less than a decade after he constructed Palliser's Cottage Home No. 35.

Following the war, Edgren began his religious studies in New York. In 1866, he married Annie Abbott Chapman, and the couple moved to Sweden where Edgren continued his preaching and theological studies. In 1871, the couple returned to the United States and moved to Chicago, where Edgren was offered a faculty position with the Baptist Union Theological Seminary, then located on 35th Street.

Apparently this job agreed with the peripatetic Edgren. A growing number of Scandinavian students encouraged the seminary to begin a department for students from Denmark, Norway, and Sweden. In 1873, Edgren was appointed chairman of the department, where he won renown as a biblical scholar.

City directories indicate Edgren moved to Morgan Park in 1877 (though the directories do not list his address) when the seminary relocated. In 1882, he purchased the lot on 111th Place (then called Berkeley Avenue) from the Blue Island Land and Building Co. In its sales brochure, the company offered to construct new houses on the lots it sold. Edgren, however, negotiated a different arrangement, possibly through his connection with the seminary. In the deed, dated July 5, 1882, Edgren and his wife agreed to purchase the land for one dollar, provided he was able "to erect and occupy a dwelling on the premises conveyed, before Jan. 1, 1883."

The Edgrens apparently completed their house in a timely manner, since there are no property records indicating forfeiture or further land payments. Furthermore, the manner by which they were able to complete the house in such a limited time period provides an interesting chapter in 19th-century housing design and construction.

Mail-Order Architecture

Faced with a deadline of just under six months in which to complete their house, the Edgrens turned to a popular source for its design: an architectural pattern book. Intended for consumers, rather than builders, pattern books featured fashionable house plans and often provided advice on matters ranging from technology to taste. Research by architectural historian Harold T. Wolff indicates that the Edgren's house was based on a design published in *Palliser's American Cottage Homes*, published in 1878.

George Palliser (1849-1903) was an English immigrant who arrived in Newark, New Jersey, in 1868. He worked as a master carpenter and became a co-owner of a millwork company. In 1873, he moved to Bridgeport, Connecticut, where he formed a company commissioned to build speculative housing by the town's mayor, and future circus entrepreneur, P.T. Barnum.

The publication of inexpensive pattern books was the key to Palliser's success. In 1876, he published a booklet called *Model Homes for the People, a Complete Guide to the Proper and*

PALLISER, PALLISER & CO.,

ARCHITECTS,

Rooms 5, 6, 7 and 8 PEOPLES' SAVINGS BANK BUILDING, -- 328 MAIN ST., CORNER BANK,

BRIDGEPORT, CONN.,

After November 1, 1882, New York City,

PREPARE

DESIGNS, DRAWINGS & SPECIFICATIONS

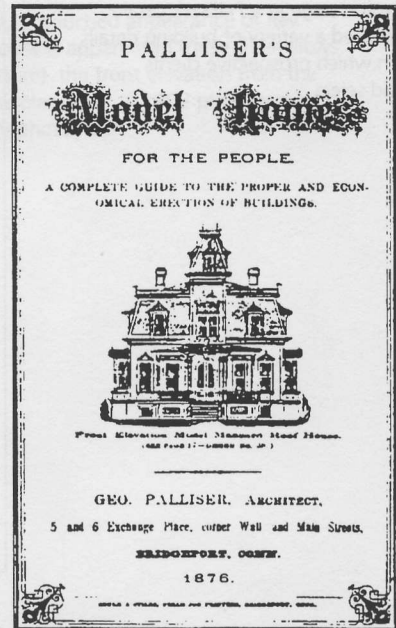
FOR EVERY DESCRIPTION OF BUILDINGS,

For erection in any part of the world. (Public Buildings, as Churches, Schools, Court Houses, Jails, etc., are Specialties.)
They also give special attention to the remodeling of existing structures, and the designing of

FURNITURE, INTERIOR DECORATIONS & MONUMENTS.

Consultations on matters pertaining to Building, Drainage, Sanitary Works,
Ventilation, Machinery, Valuations, &c., &c.

CAN REFER TO OVER A THOUSAND BUILDINGS ERECTED IN ALL PARTS OF THE WESTERN WORLD.



Economical Erection of Buildings. It sold for 25 cents, at a time when comparable books cost as much as ten dollars. Palliser was able to lower the cost by including ads from local businesses and by printing it on inexpensive paper. Its low cost, coupled with the wide variety of stylish, low-cost designs it featured, made the book a success, selling all of the 5,000 copies printed.

By 1878, George was joined by his brother Charles in "Palliser, Palliser and Co. " which became the first large mail-order-plan business. Neither were architects in the modern sense of the word, though George's experience was probably sufficient at the time for him to be recognized as one.

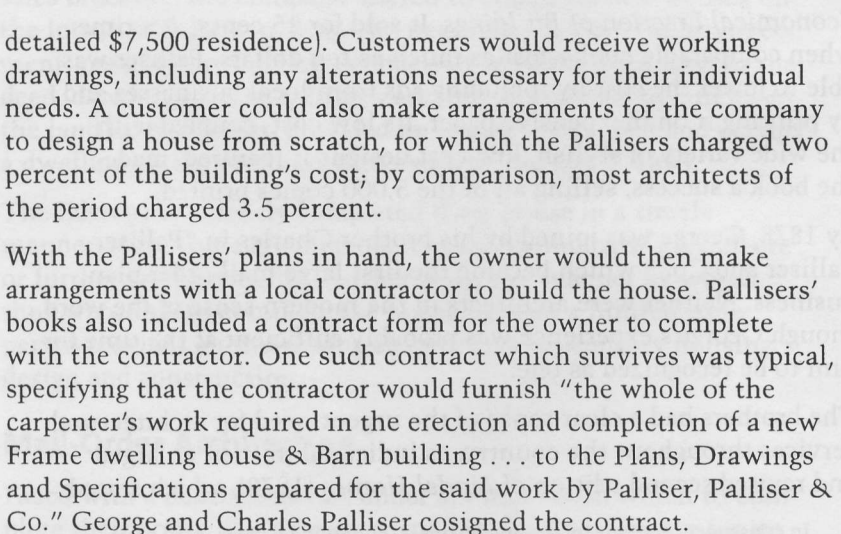
The brothers had a clear sense of the urgent need for architectural services throughout the country, as indicated in their enlarged and revised second edition of *Model Homes* (1878), which stated:

In consequence of our increasing business, supplying parties in all parts with Designs, etc., we found it necessary to adopt a system for conducting this class of business, and with which to supply a want long felt, especially in the country where Architects had done but little business, and the people had been obliged to plan their own houses or copy from neighbors. This led us to issue the first edition of *Model Homes*.

The Pallisers emphasized the mistake of trying to build a house by relying in one's own taste or that of local builders, warning that "without working drawings [from their company] it is impossible for any one to carry out the spirit of a Design as intended by the Designer."

In effect, the Pallisers offered the services of a mail-order architect. Anyone interested in one of their designs filled out a questionnaire addressing such matters as the building site, budget, materials desired, and space needs. Fees for plans ranged from 50 cents (for plans of a relatively modest \$3,000 house) to \$40 (for a more

The first "Palliser's" house plan book (above), published in 1876, quickly sold out all 5,000 copies. Its popularity inspired George and Charles Palliser to create a national house plan business, which provided a complete range of architectural services, as indicated by this 1882 advertisement (left).

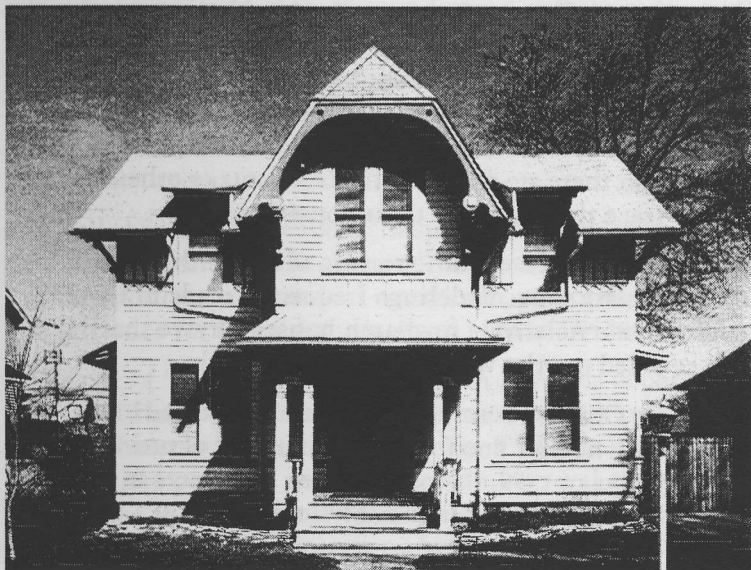


In 1878, the brothers published *Palliser's American Cottage Homes*, featuring what an advertisement called "50 designs of Modern Low Priced Cottages and Workingmen's Homes." It included the design (no. 35) that Rev. Edgren used for his house (see inside front cover). Described as: "A comfortable cottage of nine rooms, with modern conveniences, and adapted to the requirements of a suburban residence," its cost was given as \$2,800. The Edgrens borrowed \$1,500 from the seminary, indicating either the house was cheaper to build or that they used some of their own savings.

The house was built largely as it appeared in *Palliser's American Cottage Homes*. A 1908 photograph of the front of the house shows that it exactly matched the drawing of the front elevation that was published in the Pallisers' book. The design of the rear of the house, however, differs from these drawings, and it is prob-



The virtually untouched appearance of Rev. Edgren's house is apparent in these three views (top to bottom): the front elevation from the 1878 house plan book, a 1908 photograph, and a 1999 photograph.





The only other documented Chicago example of a late-19th century "pattern book" house is located on North Damen Avenue. It was built circa 1892, based on plans published in an 1889 catalog.

able that the design was modified at the time of its construction for additional rooms. Such variations were common to accommodate the specific needs of owners. The design and materials of this back portion match those of the remainder of the house.

There are no drawings or other documentation of the original interior finishes, though much of the woodwork survives, including doors, window and door trim, and the main staircase. The fireplaces have been removed, and the walls and ceilings have been changed.

The exterior changes since 1909 are relatively minor, including:

- the removal of the south chimney;
- the replacement of the original pair of wood-and-glass front doors with plain, ca. 1990 ones; and
- alterations to the original porch railings and front stair. The porch originally had a balustrade of boards perforated with diamond-shaped cutouts (instead of open spindles), and the stair was flanked by low wooden walls (see page 16).

The Edgren's house is a rare documented example of a pattern-book house in Chicago. Most pattern-book designs were built in the West or in rural locations where architects were either not available or their services were considered too expensive. In contrast, more than 100 architecture firms were listed in the Chicago directory of 1882.

A small number of such houses from this era are known to exist in outlying neighborhoods and older suburbs like Evanston or Oak Park. One example in Chicago is at 4512 N. Damen Ave. It was built from plans published in *Houses and Cottages*, by David S. Hopkins, published in 1889. Property records indicate that the house was constructed circa 1892.

The scarcity of pattern-book houses stems, in part, from the difficulty of identifying them. Early building permits did not list architects. Also, notices of many architect-designed houses were published in building trades magazines as a way of informing contractors who might want to bid on a job. In the case of a pattern-book house, the property owner made private arrangements with the Pallisers (or other pattern-book publishers) and a local contractor, for which there are no published accounts or other public records to trace the history of their construction.

The other factor affecting the documentation of late-19th-century pattern-book houses are the remodelings frequently made to them by subsequent owners. Relatively few such houses survive that have not been re-sided or otherwise altered significantly.

The survival of this Chicago example of Palliser's Cottage House No. 35 is particularly notable due to the high number of previous owners. As of 1999, there have been 16 owners in 117 years, who have kept this house remarkably intact.

Good Architecture at Low Prices

Pattern books were a phenomenon of the United States, which has idealized home-ownership throughout its brief 200-year history. This type of publication made house plans and architectural services widely available, in the same way the mail order catalog did for general merchandise beginning in the 1870s. Architecture pattern books were also important taste-makers, disseminating information about architectural styles beyond professional circles to a very receptive general audience. They provided an inexpensive design alternative to a growing middle class that had limited finances.

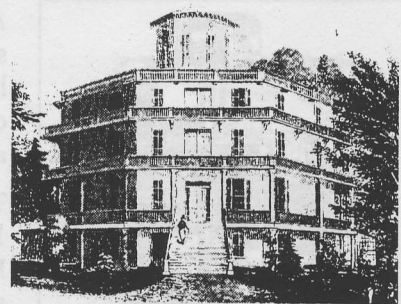
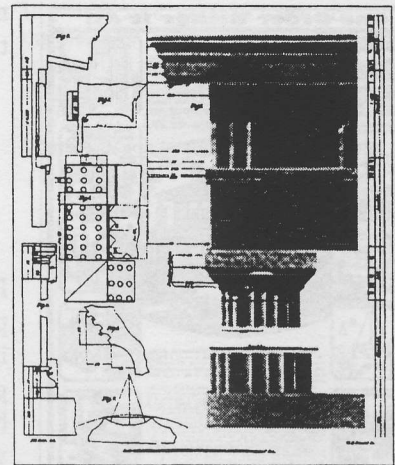
The idea of building houses from published plans was popularized in the 19th century, but books of architectural drawings date to the publication of Andrea Palladio's celebrated *Four Books of Architecture* in 1570. These classically-inspired designs became the sources for some of the most prestigious colonial-era houses in the United States. Asher Benjamin and Minard Lafever published important handbooks for American architects and builders in the late-18th and early-19th centuries, discussing technical construction matters. The books were illustrated with designs of Classical Greek and Roman-influenced columns, windows, doors, and other woodwork. However, such books were expensive and typically used by professionals and wealthy hobbyists.

The first book to deal with the design of new "suburban" dwellings was *Cottage Residences* (1842), written by Andrew Jackson Downing, America's first landscape architect. Within a decade, another influential book, *A Home for All* (1849) by theology graduate and general advice-giver Orson Squires Fowler, promoted the benefits of octagonally-shaped houses.

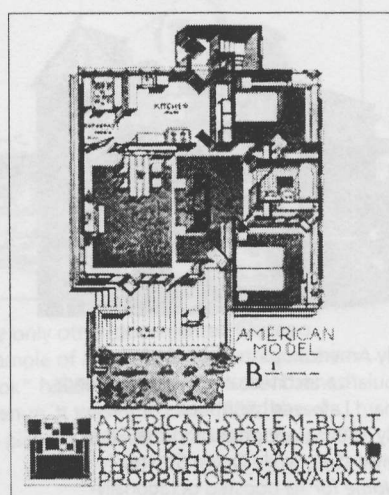
These and subsequent books published house plans and perspectives expressly for house consumers rather than builders. Dealing as much with aesthetic and social philosophy as architectural details, books written by Downing, Fowler, Calvert Vaux, Gervase Wheeler, and George Woodward helped to promote picturesque architectural styles that complemented the sylvan ideal of newly developing suburbs. These books, however, were principally inspirational, since their drawings were not sufficiently detailed for construction.

So-called "carpenters' books" helped bring high-style designs to the working and middle classes. They featured precise drawings of ornate exteriors and interior woodwork, and craftsmen used them as reference for up-to-date details to help individualize houses.

The rise of "Victorian" architecture in America occurred during the 1870s and '80s with the proliferation of very practical, mail-order architectural pattern books. The Pallisers were the most prolific and probably the best-known of several companies that published these inexpensive books. In *The American Family Home, 1800-1960*, architectural historian Clifford Edward Clark, Jr.



Early American pattern books helped popularize architectural styles and trends. Minard Lafever's handbooks of the early 1800s (top) promoted the Greek Revival style, while Orson Squires Fowler's *A Home for All* boosted octagonally-shaped buildings. Above: Fowler's own 60-room residence was built in 1853 in Fishkill, New York (demolished).



Mail-order house plans grew in popularity during the early-20th century. A circa 1910 advertisement (top) promotes the "Modern Home" plans available from Sears, Roebuck and Co., while a 1916 brochure (above) depicts the "American System-Built House Model B-1" design of Frank Lloyd Wright.

notes that the individual character of the Pallisers' designs set them apart from predecessors:

What was new was the greater emphasis on artistic affect, the heightened sense of the home as personal expression, and the dramatic transformation of roofs and siding to appear both "useful and ornamental." To achieve the desired "Artistic" impact, the external and internal features of the home became more exaggerated, the designs more varied, and the ornamentation more profuse. The goal was visual delight.

By providing mail-order architecture services in addition to their publications, the Pallisers were among the most prolific and influential designers of their time. Between 1876 and 1908, they published more than 20 books. Through their design services and books—more than 50,000 copies of *Palliser's Useful Details* alone were sold—the firm made high-style designs available to people who would not otherwise have had contact with architects.

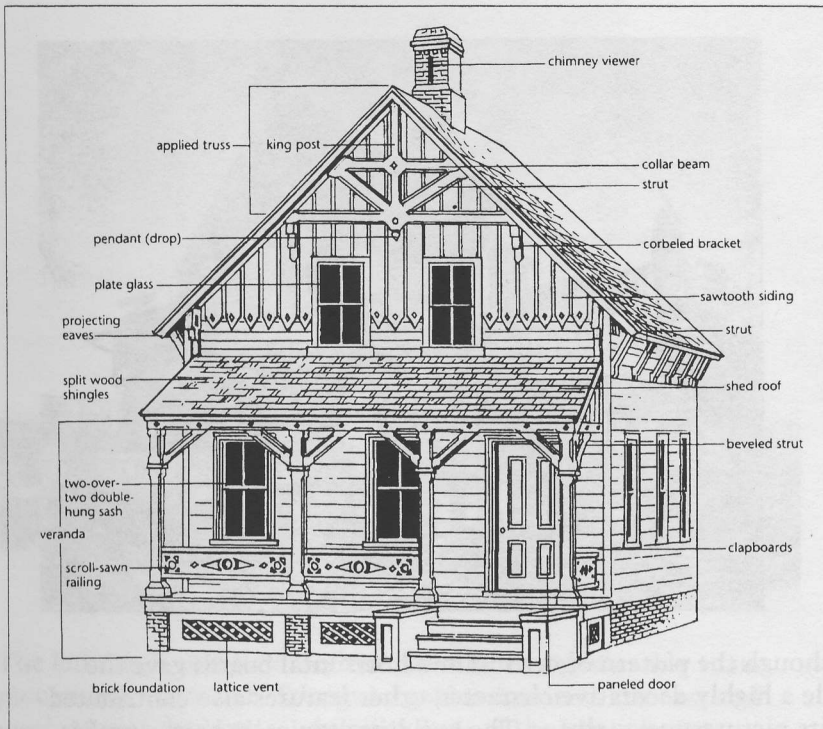
Architectural historian Michael Tomlan has summarized the firm's significance, stating: "If any one firm in American history might be cited as contributing most to the democratization of late-19th-century domestic ideas, that firm must surely be Palliser, Palliser and Company."

The volume of the Pallisers' business inspired others. Beginning in 1881, with the publication of *Artistic Modern Houses of Low Cost*, Robert W. Shoppell became the Pallisers' major competitor in the mail-order house plans business. George F. Barber & Co. went one step further by selling ready-to-assemble houses in crates that were delivered to owners.

The mail-order design practice that the Pallisers pioneered was adapted and expanded in the 1900s by the Radford Architectural Co. of Riverside, Illinois, and the Gordon Van-Tine Co. of Davenport, Iowa. Sears, Roebuck and Co. sold house kits from catalogs beginning in 1912. The designs offered by these companies ranged from picturesque Victorian, to historical revival, to craftsman bungalows. One of the best collections of Sears' homes in the Midwest is in the suburb of Downers Grove, Illinois.

Even Frank Lloyd Wright, one of the greatest architects of the 20th century, got involved with the mass-marketing of houses when he developed a series of prefabricated housing designs marketed under the name of American System-Built Houses. Ironically, the two Chicago houses that were built for this company are located near the Edgren House, at 10410 and 10541 S. Hoyne Ave.

Streamlined, steel-clad Lustron houses of the 1930s and '40s extended the idea of pre-fabricated, high-style houses into the Modern era. Today, plans for dream houses remain an active part of the American consciousness, as near as home improvement magazines in the grocery store check-out lanes or on the Internet. The service is the same one that was used by Rev. Edgren, only that much easier to get.



The "Stick Style" takes its name from the profusion of ornamental woodwork and overlaid clapboards. This illustration of common Stick Style features appears in *The Visual Dictionary of American Domestic Architecture*.

A House of Sticks

In addition to its importance as an example of pattern-book design, the Edgren House is also considered one of the city's best examples of the "Stick Style" of architecture. This style originated on the East Coast in the 1850s, but versions of it did not begin to appear in the Midwest until the 1870s.

The Stick Style takes its name from the overlay pattern of vertical, horizontal, and diagonal boards that were used on the exterior of the house—particularly at the corners and around gables and windows—in order to articulate the building's underlying structural frame. This "stick work" was often painted a darker color than the wall to enhance the facade's three-dimensional quality.

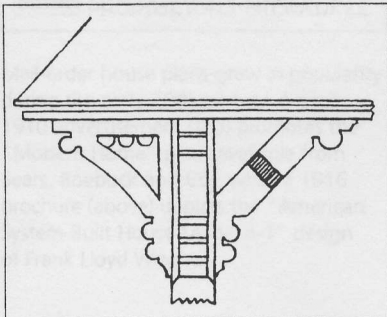
At the time of its creation, the style was referred to as "modern" because it made no obvious references to historic styles in the way that contemporary picturesque styles such as the Italianate, Classical Revival, or Gothic Revival did.

Its name is attributed to architectural historian Vincent Scully, who defined the characteristics of the style in his book *The Shingle Style* (1955; reissued in 1971 as *The Shingle Style and the Stick Style*). Scully recognized the significant departure of this new approach from older designs:

This new aesthetic sensibility to the expression of the light wood structure in a sense stripped the skin of the [older] Greek Revival and brought the frame to light as the skeleton of a new and organically wooden style.



Palliser's Cottage Home No. 35 is considered the city's best example of a small-scale, Stick Style residence. The applied boardwork suggests the building's structural framing, which was considered a "modern" design feature at the time of its construction in 1882. The projection over the front porch, a complex roofline, deep overhanging eaves, and carved brackets (below) were also characteristic of the Stick Style.



Although the pattern of vertical and horizontal boards gave the style a highly decorative character, other features also contributed to its picturesque qualities. The buildings typically have a proliferation of projections, such as bays and overhanging eaves which create deep shadows across the facade. Exotic rooflines are also characteristic, and porch roofs and gable ends are often supported by brackets and stick-like posts which further suggest the building's structural framework.

The inspiration for the style's name, as well as its overall picturesque quality, is apparent in the Edgren House. The applied stick work divides the exterior walls into a variety of sections filled with clapboards. The windows and roofline are similarly accented by wide woodwork. Bands of vertical boards and battens (the narrow wood strips covering the seams between the boards), which are located above the porch entrance and below the roof and window bays, give the walls further variety. These elements are painted in contrasting colors that emphasize the stick work.

Furthermore, its relatively small scale made this a very affordable and buildable house, but its bold woodwork and framing elements, as well as its projections and multi-planed design, make the house a sophisticated example of this picturesque architectural style.

The house is sited in the middle of an ample 50-foot-wide lot and has four finished facades, making it an unusual example in Chicago of a free-standing Stick Style dwelling. (Most of the other examples are located in denser neighborhoods having smaller building lots; consequently, they have only one finished facade.)



All Saints Episcopal Church, at 4550 N. Hermitage, was built the year after Palliser's Cottage Home No. 35. A designated Chicago Landmark, the church is viewed as the city's best example of a large-scale, Stick Style design.

The building's complex roofline contributes significantly to its picturesque character. Triangular gables dominate the east and west sides of the house, while the front of the house features a "jerkinhead" gable flanked by two "shed" dormers, which appear to be popping through the roof.

Architects animated Stick Style houses by using slightly projecting elements to create shadows. "The strength and character of a building depend almost wholly on the shadows which are thrown upon its surface by projecting members," according to architect Henry W. Cleaveland in *Village and Farm Cottages* (1856). The gables on the Edgren house are pulled forward, creating deep overhanging eaves. The shadows created by the eaves and their bargeboards, with their decorative cutouts, invigorate the exterior walls as the sun moves across them during the day.

The woodwork ornament on the house is in keeping with its overall character. The porch is decorated with incised posts, brackets, and panels with circular cut-outs. Carved rafter ends are underneath the eaves, with triangular "knee" brackets at their sides.

Few examples of Stick Style houses survive in Chicago, though they are somewhat common in older suburbs. Based on research from the *Chicago Historic Resources Survey*, there are less than 30 representative examples citywide, including several in Morgan Park. One of the best examples is the All Saints Church, 4550 N. Hermitage Ave. (1883), which was designated a Chicago Landmark in 1982. The Palliser's Cottage Home No. 35 is considered one of Chicago's best surviving examples of a Stick Style residence.

APPENDIX

Criteria for Designation

According to the Municipal Code of Chicago (Sec. 2-120-620 and -630), the Commission on Chicago Landmarks has the authority to recommend a building or district for landmark designation if the Commission determines that it meets two or more of the stated "criteria for landmark designation," as well as possesses a significant degree of its historic design integrity.

Based on the findings in this report, the following should be considered by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks in determining whether to recommend that Palliser's Cottage Home No. 35 (a.k.a., the Edgren House) be designated as a Chicago Landmark.

Criterion 1: Critical Part of the City's Heritage

Its value as an example of the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social, or other aspects of the heritage of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois, or the United States.

The house built by theology professor Rev. Johan Alexis Edgren in 1882 is one of the earliest surviving residences of architectural distinction in Morgan Park, a community which is renowned for the stylistic variety and quality of its late-19th and early-20th-century houses.

The house is also one of the most intact structures dating to the period when Morgan Park grew as an independent "railroad suburb," a community linked to Chicago by the Rock Island commuter rail line. During the last four decades of the 19th century, rail service had a strong influence on the patterns of urban settlement. Real estate speculators planned outlying communities around commuter railroads, often selling land at discounts to civic and religious institutions that would help attract middle-class families to these new "railroad suburbs."

Rev. Edgren's house also represents the community's heritage through its association with the Blue Island Land and Building Co., which not only sold the property to Rev. Edgren, but helped attract his employer, the Baptist Union Theological Seminary, to Morgan Park in 1877. The seminary prospered and played a crucial role in attracting families to the area. One of these new residents was faculty member Rev. Johan Edgren.

Criterion 4: Important Architecture

Its exemplification of an architectural type or style distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship.

The Palliser's Cottage Home No. 35 is one of the best—and virtually unaltered—pure examples of “pattern book” architecture in the Midwest. It is the only documented design in Chicago by Palliser, Palliser & Co., which were widely considered to be the nation’s most influential pattern book architects of the late-19th century.

Pattern books were essentially catalogs of house plans that could be ordered through the mail and used by a local contractor to build houses. Such publications, and the associated design services provided by the companies that published them, made distinctive house plans widely available.

The design for Rev. Edgren’s house in Chicago’s Morgan Park community was published in *Palliser’s American Cottage Homes* in 1878. As “design no. 35,” it was described as: “A comfortable cottage of nine rooms, with modern conveniences, and adapted to the requirements of a suburban residence.”

In addition to being a rare documented example of a pattern-book house, Pallisers’ Cottage Home No. 35 is also an excellent and rare Chicago example of the Stick Style of architecture. The inspiration for the style’s name, as well as its overall picturesque appearance, is apparent in the design of this residence, which features applied “stick work” laid over the top of the building’s exterior cladding. It also features decorative woodwork and a distinct roofline that make the house an archetype of this style.

The house is sited in the middle of an ample 50-foot-wide lot and has four finished facades, making it an unusual example in Chicago of a free-standing Stick Style dwelling. (Most of the other examples are located in denser neighborhoods having smaller building lots; consequently, they have only one finished facade.)

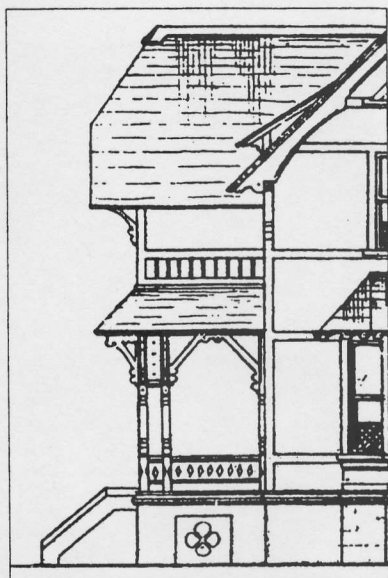
Few examples of Stick Style houses survive in Chicago, though they are somewhat common in older outlying suburbs. The *Chicago Historic Resources Survey* notes less than 30 examples citywide. Together with the All Saints Episcopal Church, 4550 N. Hermitage Ave. (1883), which was designated a Chicago Landmark in 1982, this house ranks as one of the city’s best examples.

Criterion 5: Important Architect

Its identification as the work of an architect, designer, engineer or builder whose individual work is significant in the history or development of the City of Chicago, the State of Illinois or the United States.

Through the publication of inexpensive house-plan catalogs, or pattern books, George and Charles Palliser were among the most prolific and influential designers of their time. Architectural historian Michael Tomlan has summarized their significance, stating: “If any one firm in American history might be cited as





contributing most to the democratization of late-19th-century domestic ideas, that firm must surely be Palliser, Palliser and Company."

Between 1876 and 1908, the Pallisers published more than 20 books, making high-style designs available to people who would not otherwise have had contact with architects.

The house built for Rev. and Mrs. Edgren is the only documented Pallisers' design in Chicago. Despite the Palliser's national prominence, probably only a handful of houses were built in Chicago based on their designs, largely due to the wide availability of local architectural services.

Integrity

The integrity of the proposed landmark must be preserved in light of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and ability to express its historic community, architectural or aesthetic interest or value.

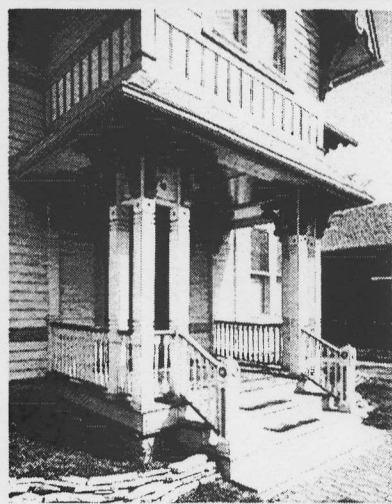
The exterior of the Palliser's Cottage Home No. 35 retains its historic integrity to a high degree. The only exterior changes are:

- the removal of the south chimney;
- the replacement of the original pair of wood-and-glass front doors with plain, ca. 1990 ones; and
- alterations to the original porch railings and front stair. The porch originally had a balustrade of boards perforated with diamond-shaped cutouts (instead of open spindles), and the stair was flanked by low wooden walls.

Significant Historical and Architectural Features

Whenever a building is under consideration for landmark designation, the Commission on Chicago Landmarks is required to identify the "significant historical and architectural features" of the property. This is done to enable the owners and the public to understand which elements are considered most important to preserve the historical and architectural character of the proposed landmark.

Based on its evaluation of Palliser's Cottage Home No. 35, the Commission staff recommends that the significant historical and architectural features be identified as: all exterior elevations of the house, including the rooflines.



The only major changes to Palliser's Cottage Home No. 35—in nearly 120 years—are the replacement of the front porch railing and the original front doors. A 1908 photograph (middle) reveals that the railing was built as a solid board with diamond-shaped cutouts, according to the Pallisers' 1878 drawing (top). The front porch now features balustraded railings (bottom).

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ILLUSTRATIONS

Palliser's American Cottage Homes: cover, inside front cover, pp. 7, 12 (bottom), 16 (top).

Bob Thall, for the Commission on Chicago Landmarks: pp. 1, 7, 12, 16 (bottom).

Chicago CartoGraphics: pp. 1(right) and 2 (top).

Homes for the People, Blue Island Land & Building Co. (1886): pp. 2 (bottom) and 3.

History of the Swedes of Illinois: p. 4.

The Palliser's Late Victorian Architecture: pp. 5 (left), 6, inside back cover.

The American Family Home: p. 5 (right).

Chicago Historical Society, Prints & Photographs: pp. 7 (middle) and 16 (middle).

Tim Barton, Chicago Department of Planning and Development: p. 8 (top).

Houses and Cottages, David S. Hopkins (1889): p. 8 (bottom).

Building by the Book: Pattern-Book Architecture in New Jersey: pp. 9 (top) and 10 (top).

Old House Journal (June 1986): p. 9 (bottom)

Frank Lloyd Wright: Residences for America (postcards, 1994): p. 10 (bottom).

The Visual Dictionary of American Domestic Architecture: p. 11.

Steve Beal, for the Commission on Chicago Landmarks: p. 13.

Xi

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The Commission on Chicago Landmarks, whose nine members are appointed by the Mayor, was established in 1968. The Commission is responsible for recommending to the City Council which individual buildings, sites, objects or districts should be designated as Chicago Landmarks.

The Commission makes its recommendations to the City Council following a detailed designation process. It begins with a staff report on the historical and architectural background and significance of the proposed landmark. The next step is a vote by the Landmarks Commission as to whether the proposed landmark is worthy of consideration. Not only does this preliminary vote initiate the formal designation process, but it places the review of city permits for the property under the jurisdiction of the Commission until the final landmark recommendation is acted on by the City Council.

Please note that this landmark designation report is subject to possible revision during the designation process. Only language contained within the designation ordinance recommended to the City Council should be regarded as final.